

MODULE 5

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this module, the trainee, without the aid of references, will be able to:

1. Name the act that mandates the proper treatment and humane handling of food animals slaughtered in USDA inspected plants.
2. Describe two acceptable methods of stunning.
3. Describe a method of slaughter that is exempt from stunning.
4. Name the blood vessels that must be severed to accomplish the bleeding process.
6. Describe feed and water requirements.
7. Describe the space requirements for birds withheld from slaughter longer than 24 hours.
8. Describe the proper handling of "downer" birds.
9. Describe the inspector's actions if inhumane handling of birds is observed.
10. Describe the inspector's actions if inhumane handling of birds as a result of facility deficiencies is observed.
11. Give an example of an inspector's action if plant management fails to correct inhumane handling of birds.
12. Give an example of an inspector's action if plant management fails to correct facility deficiencies that result in the inhumane treatment of birds.
13. Describe an inspector's action when operations are stopped for a violation of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act.
14. Describe the action the Administrator might take to prevent the inhumane slaughtering of ratites.

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MODULE 5

SCRIPT

Introduction

The Humane Methods of Slaughter Act of 1978 made the proper treatment and humane handling of food animals slaughtered in USDA inspected slaughter plants mandatory. The species included were cattle, calves, horses, mules, sheep, goats, swine, and other livestock.

Under the authority of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, the standards for the humane slaughter ratites were developed to closely parallel those of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act.

Like the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, the Ratite Slaughter Inspection Guidelines require that ratites intended for slaughter be rendered insensible to pain before being shackled, hoisted, cast, or cut. Other requirements include: (1) downers cannot be dragged while conscious, (2) physical retaliation against the birds is not allowed, and (3) water must be provided to the birds at all times.

An important inspector responsibility is to monitor plant facilities and plant personnel activities to assure compliance with this law.

Slaughter in accordance with the ritual requirements of a religious faith are exempt from certain provisions of this law. Examples of ritual slaughter include Kosher slaughter and Islamic (Halal) slaughter.

Stunning

Two acceptable methods of stunning ratites are the use of a mechanical

captive bolt stunner and electrical stunning.

Mechanical stunners have gun-type mechanisms that fire a penetrating or nonpenetrating bolt or shaft out of a muzzle. The bolt is discharged or propelled by a measured charge of gunpowder (a blank cartridge) or by compressed air.

The plant employee must be able to accurately and consistently position the stunning device so the bolt hits the skull at the right location to produce immediate unconsciousness. The employee must also be able to properly adjust the air pressure or detonation charge when sex, species, or size of the bird changes.

Captive bolts powered by compressed air must have accurate, continuously operating air pressure gauges. The gauges must be easy to read and conveniently located for inspection.

When fired, the bolt in the penetrating type of captive bolt stunner penetrates the skull and enters the brain. Unconsciousness is caused by physical brain damage, sudden changes in intracranial pressure, and concussion.

Some plants may use the nonpenetrating (concussion) type captive bolt stunner. This type of stunner has a bolt with a flattened circular head (mushroom head). When fired, the mushroom head meets the skull but does not penetrate. The bird becomes insensible from the impact or concussion.

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Another type of stunning is electrical stunning. The bird is physically restrained so that the electric current can be applied with a minimum of excitement and discomfort to the bird. Normally, both electrodes are applied to the head. The current must be sufficient to ensure surgical anesthesia throughout the bleeding operation. The operator must control the timing, voltage, and current to properly stun each bird.

If too much current is applied during the stunning process, capillaries can be damaged, resulting in multiple pin-point hemorrhages in the muscle tissue called "splashing" or "speckling". These hemorrhages and/or other tissue changes might interfere with the inspection procedure.

Sticking (Bleeding)

Birds must be either stunned or killed prior to being shackled, hoisted, thrown, cast, or cut (stuck). The birds should be stuck quickly after stunning (within 30 seconds) to prevent them from regaining consciousness during bleeding.

Bleeding may be accomplished by severing the jugular vein. Alternately, the major vessels in the caudal cervical area may be severed provided the thoracic cavity is not penetrated.

In accordance with the ritual requirements of the Jewish (Kosher) faith, slaughtering is permitted without a stunning device. Each bird is cut through the appropriate blood vessels while restrained in a special pen prior to hoisting. The bird is fully conscious when the stick or cut takes place. Sticking is done by a Chaced. The ramps, driveways, and the floors of

(slaughterer) chosen from the community, trained in the laws of the orthodox religion, and supervised by a rabbi in his area. The cut is made with a razor-sharp knife called a Chalet that is honed after each cut. Shackling and hoisting prior to sticking is allowed but is not a common practice.

Handling

Besides monitoring the establishment's stunning procedures, the inspector must monitor the establishment's humane handling of the birds.

Personnel responsible for moving birds from the unloading ramps to the holding pens and from the holding pens to the stunning area must do so with a minimum of excitement and discomfort to the birds. Birds must not be driven faster than a normal walking speed.

When moving birds, the use of canvas slappers or any other implement must be minimized to prevent injury and excitement. The use of implements such as shovels, whips, etc., which, in the opinion of the inspector, can or will cause injury, are prohibited.

Water and Feed

Birds must have access to water at all times while in holding pens. If they are withheld from slaughter longer than 24 hours, they must also have access to feed.

Facilities

the pens must be constructed and

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maintained so the birds have good footing. It may even be necessary for the plant to use sand during the winter to overcome slick conditions. Suspect pens must be covered.

All pens, driveways and ramps must be constructed so that birds are not driven around sharp corners. They must be maintained in good repair and kept free from sharp or protruding objects that can cause injury. Loose boards, splintered or broken planks, broken pipe rails, broken unloading ramps, and unnecessary openings where the head, feet, or legs of a bird may be injured must be repaired.

Again, if birds are to be withheld from slaughter longer than 24 hours, they must have enough room in the holding pens to lie down.

Disabled Birds

Birds disabled or unable to move will be segregated into the suspect pen. Dragging a conscious bird that is unable to walk is strictly prohibited. The establishment must either stun these downers before dragging them or move the birds by placing them on a skid, bucket lift, or some other type of equipment suitable for moving a conscious but disabled bird.

Inspection Responsibility

If the inspector observes a breakdown in the establishment's humane handling procedures, he/she must take immediate action. For example, the inspector might notice an employee driving birds with an instrument that can cause injury (the edge of a shovel, a large board, or a

baseball bat). The inspector is required to inform plant management and insist that the situation be corrected immediately. If plant management fails to correct the situation, a U.S. Rejected tag should be attached to the alleyway leading to the stunning area. The plant would not be allowed to move any more birds to the stunning area until satisfactory assurances that the inhumane handling will not happen again are received from management.

If inhumane treatment of birds is a result of facility deficiencies, the inspector must also take immediate action. For example, if the inspector notices that broken pipes are cutting and bruising the birds, he/she must inform plant management and insist the deficiencies be corrected. A U.S. Rejected tag should be attached to the pens or alleyways with the broken pipes and should not be allowed to resume use until the deficiencies have been corrected.

Whenever operations are stopped due to a violation of the Humane Slaughter Act, the IIC must send a written report through channels to the area supervisor. The report must contain the following information:

1. The nature of the violation noted
2. The plant management official notified
3. The length of time the operations were stopped
4. The corrections made or the nature of the assurances given
5. Whether or not the problems were

resolved locally

To prevent the inhumane slaughtering or handling of ratites, the Administrator may determine it necessary to temporarily suspend the official establishment's inspection service.

Module 5 Supplement

Complete the following using the script as the reference.

1. Under the authority of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, the standards for the humane slaughter of ratites were developed to closely parallel those of the _____ of _____.
2. Slaughter in accordance with the ritual requirements of a religious faith are _____ from certain provisions of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act of 1978.
3. Examples of ritual slaughter include _____ slaughter and _____ (Halal) slaughter.
4. Two acceptable methods of stunning ratites are the use of _____ captive bolt stunners and _____ stunners.
5. The plant employee must be able to accurately and consistently position the stunning device so that the bolt hits the skull at the right location to produce _____ unconsciousness.
6. When using an electrical stunner, "the current must be _____ to ensure surgical anesthesia throughout the bleeding operation."
7. Birds must be either stunned or killed _____ to being shackled, hoisted, thrown, cast, or cut.
8. Bleeding may be accomplished by severing either of the following:
 - a. the _____ vein.
 - b. the _____ vessels of the caudal cervical area provided the

thoracic cavity is _____ penetrated.

9. Personnel responsible for moving birds ... " must do so with a minimum of _____ and _____ to the birds."
10. When moving birds, ... "the use of implements such as shovels, whips, etc., which, in the opinion of the inspector, can or will cause injury , are _____ ."
11. Birds must have access to water at _____ times while in holding pens.
12. If birds are withheld from slaughter longer than 24 hours, they must also have access to _____ .
13. All pens, driveways, and ramps ... "must be maintained in good repair and kept free from sharp or protruding objects that can cause _____ ."
14. If birds are withheld from slaughter longer than _____ hours, they must have enough room to lie down .
15. The dragging of a conscious bird that is unable to walk is strictly _____.
16. If the inspector observes a breakdown in the establishment's humane handling procedures, he/she must take _____ action.
17. Give an example of the action an inspector might take if plant management fails to correct the inhumane handling of birds.
18. If inhumane treatment of birds is a result of facility deficiencies, the inspector must also take _____ action.

19. Give an example of the action an inspector might take if plant management fails to correct facility deficiencies that result in the inhumane treatment of birds.
20. Whenever operations are stopped due to a violation of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, the IIC must send a _____ report through channels to the area supervisor. The report must contain the following information.
- a. The _____ of the violation
 - b. The plant management _____ notified
 - c. The _____ of time the operations were stopped
 - d. The _____ made or the nature of the _____ given
 - e. Whether or not the problems were resolved _____
21. To prevent the inhumane slaughtering or handling of ratites, the Administrator may determine it necessary to temporarily _____ the official establishment's inspection service.